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UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
SOIL CONSERVATION SERVICE
Washington 25, D. C.

FIELD MEMORANDUM SCS   1136

Re: Cost of long distance telephone
calls

November 10, 1950

TO ALL RANKING FIELD OFFICERS:

I recently asked that a statement be prepared on the cost of long distance
telephone calls. In reviewing this statement I note a Service-wide increase
of 33 percent in the amount spent for long distance calls in the fiscal year
1950 over the amount for 1949, and an 85 percent increase for this purpose
in 1950 over that for 1948.

It is realized that some of the increase is the result of program expansion
in the field and some is due to increased telephone rates. However, it does
not appear that these two factors account for all of the increase in cost.
Some of us may have become a bit lax in determining the necessity for some
of the calls made. I have personally received some calls on matters that
could have been handled just as well by telegram or perhaps even by letter.

U.S.D.A. Regulations (1 AR 943-946 and 4 AR 504) specifically point out the
requirements for analysis and control of expenditures for long distance
telephone calls and other communication costs. Departmental Regulations
(4 AR 492a and 7 AR 230.5 b) also provide that the head of the Departmental
agency concerned must approve any vouchers for long distance telephone toll
calls made from private residences, otherwise, no appropriation of the
Department is available to make payment for such calls. Consequently, except
in certain circumstances where official telephones are installed in residences
that are used as offices (7 AR 230.5 c) any vouchers covering such calls must
be forwarded to my office for approval.

It naturally behooves all of us to prevent unnecessary expenditures and to
keep in mind that our objective is to get as much conservation on the land
as is possible with each conservation dollar.